

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

May 20, 2011

To: Mark Burnham, Vice President for Governmental Affairs

Fr: Linda O. Stanford, Associate Provost for Academic Services

Re: **Veterans and Michigan State University**

Per your request, here is a basic description regarding admissions and student services for veterans at Michigan State University. There are many campus units that serve veterans. This is an introduction.

Recruitment of veterans is related to the quality and the proximity of degree programs and their retention and persistence is related to the quality of student support services they receive. At Michigan State University these services are provided at the point-of-service (e.g. Office of the Registrar, Counseling Center, Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, etc.).

Veterans and their benefits-eligible family members are enrolled at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The numbers have increased over 400% since 2005.



Fall 2005:

- Total students using veterans education benefits (population includes veterans, spouses and dependents): 102
- Total veterans using education benefits: 74

Fall 2010:

- Total students using veterans education benefits (population includes veterans, spouses and dependents): 458
- Total veterans using education benefits: 316

Admissions

Assistant Director of Admissions, Mr. Michael Kolar, serves as our liaison in regards to veteran admissions issues. He participates in orientation programs supported by various branches of the armed services. Mr. Kolar communicates regularly with veteran support services across campus when processing veteran applications. The admission process for veterans, as it is with all students, involves a holistic review. Such a process takes into consideration the

applicant's overall academic preparation as well as life experiences reflected in the individual's personal statement. An admissions review focuses on the special talents/skills the applicant brings to the institution and on what the institution can provide the student in terms of opportunity.

Financial Aid

In addition to participating in the various veteran's benefit programs, including the GI Bill, MSU offers institutional financial aid programs designed specifically for veterans.

The MSU Disabled Veteran's Assistance Program supplements other financial aid and veteran benefits a student who was disabled in military service is receiving so that all the full cost of attendance (tuition, room and board, books, and miscellaneous expenses) is covered with gift assistance and work. If a student's disability precludes employment in student employment positions, then this component is replaced additional MSU gift assistance.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is available to students using the Post-9/11 GI Bill and uses a 50/50 matching grant from the Veteran's Administration and MSU to cover the non-resident portion of tuition. The GI Bill itself covers the resident portion and other normal student expenses for most students.

These programs are described in greater detail at:
<http://finaid.msu.edu/veterans.asp>.

Certification and Records

The Office of the Registrar provides the following services to students receiving veteran's education benefits:

- Assists students with completing the paperwork required for GI Bill benefits.
- Certifies students' enrollment in compliance with Department of Veteran Affairs Regulations.
- Works closely with the Controller's Office to coordinate payment arrangements for students.
- Processes appeals for in-state tuition classification in accordance with University policy (see below for relevant sections of the Out-of-State Tuition Regulations related to veterans).

"If a student, the spouse of a student, or the parent of a dependent student, is an active member of the regular armed forces who maintains Michigan as his/her official home of record, is registered to vote in Michigan and files a Michigan income tax return as a resident, the student shall be classified as in-state.

A student, the spouse of a student, or the parent of a dependent student who, is a veteran of at least 12 consecutive months of active United States military service prior to honorable separation, or as a member of the Reserve or National Guard, was mobilized for at least 12 months of active military service, and who moves to Michigan with the intent to become a domiciliary of Michigan within 90 days following discharge or return to non-active duty, shall be classified as in-state.

A member of the armed forces in active or reserve duty status attending Michigan State University in a degree program funded by the Department of Defense shall be classified as an in-state student, as will his or her spouse and his or her dependent children. If the service member leaves the state of Michigan, this in-state status will continue for the service member, spouse, and dependent children as long as those who are students conform to the continuous enrollment rule in Section 6.A below."

Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)

Disabled Veterans Assistance Program: Fall 2009 marked the beginning of the Disabled Veterans Assistance Program passed by the Board of Trustees and MSU administration. This program welcomes veterans with service-related disabilities to MSU with a unique financial aid package void of loan obligations. In support of this initiative, the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) welcomed over 10 veterans with service-related disabilities. Each veteran received an individualized needs assessment, received support in accessing the DVAP, and was welcomed into a supportive network that helps them maximize ability and opportunity. To provide the best support possible for veterans, the RCPD combined staff interest, donor support, and community networks to extend knowledge of veterans issues in ways that celebrated service to country while recognizing academic and career potential despite disability. Key preparation activities included:

- June 2009, the RCPD hosted the regional Disabled Veterans Assistance Program Summit to assemble and introduce likely partners, establish mutual understanding of MSU's new aid package, build a cross-organizational network of supports for incoming veterans, gain a collective understanding of challenges and opportunities faced by veterans and provide partners with an understanding of available resources, identify potential gaps in services or other issues that may represent unmet needs and understand differences in disability standards, documentation and reporting.
- RCPD created a Veterans with Disabilities page <http://www.rcpd.msu.edu/programs/veterans> as a welcome and information source on programs and services.

- Allocated RCPD office space for use by the newly created Student Veterans Association (SVA). This provided them with a common meeting place and kept RCPD resources readily available.
- November 2009, hosted a Student Veterans Forum which built upon the June Summit and work during the fall. This event gathered RCPD specialists, key campus partners and student veterans/service members to address student veterans' concerns and faculty/staff questions about ways for MSU to better serve the veteran/service member population.

Student Veterans of America

- MSU also hosts a student veteran's association chapter. More information about the support services provided by that program can be found at:
[www.msu.edu/~msusva/MSU Student Veterans of America/Home/Home.html](http://www.msu.edu/~msusva/MSU_Student_Veterans_of_America/Home/Home.html)

MSU Course (UGS 101) – Military Transitions in Society, offered annually. Open to student veterans at any level. This seminar is designed to help you become academically and personally successful while examining transitions from military life to civilian life, as well as examine the history of veterans in the United States. This seminar is designed for student veterans, active duty military and their family members. The issues discussed in class are issues that pertain to veterans, transition from military to college life, and to personal growth. To succeed in this class, the students are expected to explore their view of human nature as it relates to change, as well as their personal values and experiences related to transition from military to civilian life. The instructor is Shannon Lynn Burton, M.A., M.S., Academic Advising Specialist, School of Criminal Justice.

MSU Participation in the Department of Defense Passport Program, <http://www.hsidea.org/programs/upp/>

The Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance's University Passport Program is a new collaboration funded by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Department of Defense. The University Passport Program is a premier post-secondary distance education collaboration offering inter-institutional degree programs in Human Sciences. The University Passport Program provides education for careers on and around military bases that fit the professional development of military spouses, dependents, and civilian professionals serving the military. The degree and

certificate programs offered via the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance are totally online. MSU is offering programs in youth development.

Under Discussion or Development

- Establish a Veterans Coordination Committee and Resource Team. We also have a long-standing University Military Education Advisory Committee.
- Improved web presence for issues concerning veterans.
- Benchmark veterans services at other universities in the Big Ten, CIC, AAU, state of Michigan and other institutions known for best practices.

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